WHIRRAKEE

November 2007 Vol. 28 No. 10

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MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE BENDIGO FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB

Bendigo Field Naturalists Club Inc.
Address for correspondence: PO Box 396, Bendigo 3552
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Membership of the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club is open to all those interested in Natural History. The subscription rates are: Single $34; Family $40; Concession: Single $28.50; Family $34. *Whirrakee* subscription only is $34.

General meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month. The venue for General meetings is the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, Old High Street, Golden Square. The invited speaker at general meetings starts at 8:00pm and meetings conclude with supper.
If a workshop is held prior to the meeting, it will be advertised and it usually starts at 7.00pm.
The Annual Meeting is held in September.

Committee meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:30pm. Members of the Committee are the Office Bearer listed above and the following members: Bob Ruddick, Rod Orr, Jan Orr, Peter Ellis, Ben Goonan, Anthony Sheean, Rob Moors

Excursions are conducted regularly and are advertised on the diary page of the *Whirrakee*. The assembly point for excursions is the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, unless otherwise specified. In addition to local excursions, campouts are held several times each year, usually coinciding with long weekends or holiday periods.

The Bendigo Field Naturalists Club has one active group that meets regularly (the Fauna Study Group) and other groups that meet at irregular intervals.

Fauna Study Group: meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 7:30pm in the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building.
Chairman: John Burtonclay, Fadersons Lane, Mandurang (5439 5710)
Secretary: Bill Holsworth, 13 Nabilla Crs., Bendigo (5443 4063)
Equipment Officer: Maurie Lewis (0407 427179)

Bird Observers Group: This group has field excursions and the occasional lecture evening. Please consult the *Whirrakee* for details. Special bird observations should be reported to Anne Bridley 5449 3479.
To propose meetings or excursions please contact Kerrie Norris 5447 8017.

Front cover photo?...see page 2.

WHIRRAKEE

Monthly Newsletter of the Bendigo Field Naturalist Club
Vol. 28, No. 10, November 2007
Whirrakee takes its name from the Whirrakee Wattle (*Acacia williamsonii*) which is virtually endemic to the Bendigo region

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Authors are responsible for the accuracy of the information they use and also for any opinions expressed in their articles. Contributions will be included as soon as possible after they are received, although articles received more than one week after the monthly General Meeting will probably be too late for inclusion in the next issue of *Whirrakee*.
Articles in *Whirrakee* may be reproduced, but permission should be obtained from the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club, and acknowledgment should be given to the author and the Club. Some back issues are still available on request.

Editor's Note
I am afraid there was no room for a summary of last month's very attractive 'Thing of the Night' delivered by Rod Orr, and the main presentation, delivered by Wayne Webster, who stood in for Darren Perry at extremely short notice. To be honest, I found Wayne's talk quite impossible to summarise. It was – in a way – about everything... you just had to be there. In the end, I gave up trying to capture it on paper and just listened. Wayne did an excellent job 'off the cuff' and is to be congratulated for the interesting and very informative talk that he made up on the spot. At the end of his talk on Indigenous Culture, he mentioned how we might become involved in locating and protecting important sites and relics and suggested that we might be interested in learning how to recognize these important places during our travels and walks around the Central Victorian Region. Our members were very interested in Wayne's talk and I'm sure that we are a presently untapped resource, which could be of use in this work.
This edition is dedicated to Jack Ipsen, one of the foundation members of the Bendigo Field Naturalist Club. Jack died on 7th October 2007, he was 99 and still enjoyed field natting as he had done all his life. John Lindner's article on page 4 is testimony to the influence Jack had on the club and its members for many decades.

Front Page Illustration – Photographer: John Lindner
Every year, members of the Bendigo Field Naturalist Club used to be invited for Christmas lunch at Jack Ipsen's place, Lyal Glen. This photo was taken on one such occasion (18/12/2005), where Jack is engrossed in some new reading matter.

Excursions and Short Notices

November Excursion

The November excursion is going to Mt Alexander to study native plants, birds and weeds using survey quadrats.
Meet at 8am on the summit of Mt Alexander. Return time is approximately 3pm. Car pool.

For any excursion enquiries, ring Richard Goonan on 0423418815 or e-mail him on richardgoonan@optusnet.com.au

Please note that in the excursion calendar published at the start of the year, there is no December excursion planned. Therefore, the November outing above might be your last chance for this year…

Cheque without a name…

Someone has sent a bank cheque paying for their 2008 membership but has neglected to provide their name and address. The cheque was a Bendigo Bank cheque for $28.50. If that might be yours, please get in touch with Stuart Fraser, our treasurer.

What about a spot of gardening?
The next morning of work in the Club garden will be on the first Saturday in November (3rd) at 9am,
All Welcome

White Hills Botanic Gardens 150th Anniversary Celebrations

The 'Friends of Bendigo Botanic Gardens', together with the City of Greater Bendigo have planned a week of activities in November to celebrate this important anniversary. They go from Saturday 10th November through to Sunday 18th November. The Goldfields Library and the Council office have programs of the events.
Alternatively, contact Judy of 'Friends of the Botanic Gardens' on 0419 324 294, or the City of Greater Bendigo on 54346000.

Club's Address List

Anne Bridley and the rest of the BFNC would like to thank Kate Lotkowitz who has been keeping the membership address list up to date. From now on the secretary will be doing this job. If you have a change of postal address, please let Anne Bridley know, either directly or through our mail box.

Adopt-a-Highway Relaunch

A few years ago the club was involved in Vic Roads 'Adopt-a-Highway' at Huntly on the Midland Hwy.

The scheme fell into disuse, but has been relaunched by 'Keep Australia Beautiful' Victoria, in partnership with VicRoads.
The focus has been widened from litter removal to include controlling weeds, planting trees & shrubs, dealing with soil erosion and landscaping town entrances or rest areas.

The scheme is more formal now, and involves a certain amount of paperwork and record keeping. If any member wishes to become involved, Anne Bridley has a copy of the Guidelines for Applicants and Volunteers.

Some more interesting Bird Observations

by Glenise Moors

I am excited that Brown Treecreepers are feeding young in a nest box attached to a dead Lightwood in front of our house. The treecreepers have inspected various boxes each year, but have been discouraged when they found them containing possums. The Ringtail, which usually slept in the nest box in the Lightwood died a couple of months ago.

Three pairs of Fuscous Honeyeaters are nesting around the house now. I wonder if they will be successful as we have Fantail, Shining Bronze and Horsfield's Cuckoos nearby.

The White-bellied Cuckoo-shrikes still occasionally visit their nest. Maybe they are young birds!

Jack and Jean Ipsen

Jean 1908 – 1997

Jack 1908 – 7 October 2007

At some time in their lives, everyone has moments of being profoundly influenced by another person. Whether you are open to this influence depends on many circumstances – what time you have, your degree of need and perhaps vulnerability, your openness to new inspiration, your perception of other people. Someone who may have just passed you by in other circumstances, becomes at a particular time a focus, a force, indeed a point of reckoning. In that moment, your life takes a perceptible and permanent turn in another direction. Something of great value has been passed to you, resulting in a new outlook.

Jack and Jean Ipsen had that kind of influence on me, and no doubt, on many others. During 1976 – 1978, when I ran a camp for a Melbourne school at Lake Eppalock, every fortnight, I would drive past Lyal Glen, particularly noticeable in Spring with its enticing display of wattles, and wonder who lived in that small house. When I moved to Bendigo in 1979, Jack and Jean Ipsen were amongst the first people I came to know well.

Over the last 28 years, I have learned many things from Jack about the natural world. But it was his understanding of the relationships between those things – the landscape, the plants, the birds, the insects, the mammals, the reptiles – that made the greatest impression on me. He had a fundamental understanding about the unity of things in nature. Being a field naturalist was a vehicle through which something much wider was expressed. And his inquiring mind never rested, right up until the day when he drew his last breath – he was always reading an interesting book (often provided by his daughters Leanne and Karen), observing bird movements and looking out for flowers in bloom.

The way in which people such as Jack and Jean exert this positive influence has preoccupied me quite deeply – surely it is worth understanding, analysing and valuing.

These are my conclusions, expressed as intuitions and feelings.

They were always interested in ideas about the world and open to new suggestions. There were always new possibilities open for them. They had a genuine and kindly interest in other people and could cope with their limitations and inadequacies without becoming critical, downcast or negative. They looked for the best in others and could always find something. They looked forward to the future with eagerness, and were not drawn over nostalgically to the past. They seemed to know how to live, what was worth living for and how to keep track of the simple, best things in life. They lived for each other, and warmly allowed others into their lives. As a result, they were unfailingly welcoming and hospitable. For them, life was good in itself and all else followed. Above all, there was their indomitable spirit, full of optimism and courage.

As a field naturalist, Jack had many other qualities – love of the outdoors, willingness to investigate natural phenomena from first principles, using accurate observation and recording, a deeply inquiring mind, not being fazed by lack of sophisticated qualifications and access to references and authorities. Many of these pioneering qualities were shared by other founders of the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club, all of who influenced my outlook to varying degrees – Tom Patullo, Leon Rudin, Bob Allen, Jack Kellam, Frank Robbins. Jack Ipsen is the last of these founding members of our club.

Jack and Jean were ordinary in every way…
But not really. They came from very humble backgrounds and did not possess any high standard of formal education. They lived in a house in Smith Street, North Bendigo. Jack's working life included the railways, a brickworks and a spinning factory. He was also a full-time apiarist for a time. They had three children, Karen, John and Leanne. In 1970, they suffered the enormous tragedy of the death of their son, who had qualified as a doctor, and somehow, the qualities I have described, enabled them to overcome their deep sorrow and move forward without bitterness or crippling sadness. They moved out to their bush block at Lyal in 1973, when Jack had retired, long before such a thing became standard.

On New Year's Eve 1999, Jack suffered a stroke. He developed a halting gait and a limp and his face, in losing its muscle tone, also lost that characteristic sparkle which was so open and welcoming. Of necessity, he became more dependent on others, particularly Leanne and Karen, and on a domestic help service, which enabled him to remain living at Lyal. We all wondered, if he would recover his old self – well, we need not have worried. He had a very strong spirit and his abiding interest in life never waned. Yet in winter 2005, after he became ill and spent time in the Heathcote hospital, Leanne persuaded him that he had to leave his isolated life at Lyal and move to a hostel at Lancefield. And instead of fighting it and becoming depressed, he took to it like a duck to water and went from strength to strength.

I first spent time with Jack and other members of the club at the Mount Kooyoora camp, Queens Birthday weekend of 1979. I will relate a story which goes to the heart of the essential Jack Ipsen. A small group of us climbed up the northern side of the broad ridge, which emanates westwards from Mount Kooyoora itself, and crossed through the bush to the paddock on the southern side. At that time, this paddock was subject to grazing and still is. As we walked through the grass, Jack bent down, and from a depression in the ground, picked up a smooth, black, shaped piece of stone. I subsequently learned that this was an axehead (or axehead blank), fashioned out of greenstone.

The greenstone would have been quarried from either of two places in Victoria, Mount William at Lancefield or Mount Camel near Heathcote, and such axes were traded over long distances. Mount Kooyoora has many relics of the days when the aboriginal people had undisputed ownership of the landscape –

scarred trees from which bark has been removed, and rock wells, shelters and arrangements.
We could have taken the axehead home as a souvenir, or handed it over to the Museum of Victoria, or some other authority. But Jack knew better. He knew that axe belonged where it was, and he said so in his own understated way. He replaced it in its small depression in the ground. That simple act was a gesture, full of a kind of humility and certainly of an understanding, that only context determines the full significance of any natural object or organism.

John Lindner

The photo above shows Jack and Jean at a Field Naturalists Club outing to the Bendigo sewage farm on 31/3/1985. The one on the previous page shows Jack and Jean at home at Lyal Glen on 21/12 1991. (Photographer: John Lindner)

Junior Field Naturalists
Author: Rod Orr (for the Committee)

Several years ago, the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club conducted organized activities for young people of school age, most of whom were children of Club members. These Junior Field Naturalists were occupied successfully for a number of years until they grew older and moved on to further studies or into employment.
The demand for such activities seemed to disappear about 10 or 15 years ago, however, recently, requests have been made by some members and their friends for us to provide Junior Field Naturalists with suitable activities again. This could happen only if there is sufficient support from interested parents of children of school age and from enough Club members to provide suitable activities.
How much interest is there from parents for their children to become involved in Junior Field Naturalists activities and excursions, and, as a club member, would you be interested in helping to conduct a suitable activity which helps children learn about the environment?
If you have children, or friends with children who would like to be involved, or, if you have suggestions for activities which you could help to run, please let the Committee know during or before the November General meeting so that we can decide on a few essential rules and develop a program.

And even more about echidnas...

Author: Brenda Cheers

Brenda had just finished this piece for the DSE tourist paper 'Murray Guardian', when she read the October Whirrakee with the second instalment of echidna information. Echidnas are certainly proving a popular subject! Brenda included the photo below, which shows a baby echidna (called a puggle) she raised a couple of years ago. It arrived as a tiny grey blob. In the photo, it is about 40 days old and weighed 134 gram.

Echidnas are found all over Australia. Most often, the only signs of an echidna is when we see an ant mound that has been ripped open. The echidna is a mixture of mammal and reptile and is known as a monotreme. The female produces young by laying an egg into a rudimentary pouch. The only other monotreme is the platypus.

There are two species of echidna, the Long-beaked and the Short-beaked. The larger Long-beaked Echidna is only found in Papua New Guinea. The Short-beaked Echidna varies in size, with adults measuring from 30 to 45cm from the tip of the snout to the tip of the tail and weighing between 2.5 and 7kg.

The upper surface of the echidna is covered in sharp spines and there is hair between the spines. These spines are actually modified hairs that are occasionally shed. All spines are not shed at the same time, but a certain number are replaced, mainly in spring and summer. Echidna spines have a long root that goes through the skin into a special muscle layer that allows it to individually control movement of the spines. When threatened, the echidna may erect the spines on its head, or, if in grave danger, all spines are erected. The spines can also act as 'extra fingers' and they have been observed using their spines to assist them in climbing between rocks and in pipe-like channels in sandstone.

The echidna's beak is covered in a tough soft skin and the nostrils are located at the top and near the end. The nostrils of the echidna always stay open and one would expect that they would clog with dirt as it forages for food in the dirt, but they are kept clear by blowing short puffs of air through them as it forages – the snorting sounds can often be heard.

The small mouth opening, which has a gape of about 5mm, is on the underside of the beak. When the echidna finds food, its worm-like tongue, which is up to 17cm long, rapidly flicks in and out. The tongue's surface is covered in rows of barb-like structures and copious amounts of saliva that make the tongue sticky. Using these two features, the echidna's tongue draws prey into the mouth, where it is ground into a paste-like consistency by spines on the roof of the mouth and the rough pad on the top of the tongue, before it is swallowed.

Digestion in echidnas is slow because they don't have secretion glands to aid them. Digestion takes place mainly in the 3.4m long small intestine, and in one experiment, a change in diet took two full days to show up in the excrement.

Both front and back feet have five digits shaped like garden spades, These feet make the echidna a powerful digger. They can dig under large rocks, too heavy for a human to

lift, and pop them loose from the ground, allowing enough space for their tongue to search for food. An engineer equated this feat with a human supporting a compact car on his shoulders, while another person changed the tyre.
Unlike other mammals, the echidna is capable of digging straight down, by using its front and hind feet in a circular manner. They can disappear in minutes, leaving only a mound of churned up dirt.

The echidna's pouch is not a permanent pocket as it is in kangaroos, but is only fully developed by females that are preparing to lay an egg and suckle a young. It consists of flaps of skin running parallel with the body length. Females don't have teats or nipples, but have milk patches that, during lactation, excrete milk that is slurped up by the young.

Another mammalian anomaly is that there are no obvious clues as to the sex of the animal - all genitals are located internally. Sex is verified, either when there is a puggle on board, or, after death when a necropsy is performed.

During the breeding season, male echidnas will follow a female; the males push and shove each other with the loser leaving the line. This goes on until only one male is left to mate with the female. This line is known as an echidna train.

The echidna egg is laid directly into the pouch and is about the size of a 5cent piece. It is incubated in the pouch for 10.5 days. When the young echidna splits it open and wriggles out, its size is about 300mg (one third of a gram) and its front legs are well developed to grasp the hairs in the pouch. In 14 days, the puggle increases its body mass over 100-fold to about 30grams.

At about 30-40 days, a light-coloured fuzz appears on the skin surface and soon the pink skin turns to grey as coarse hairs and spines appear (in the photo on the previous page, the front limbs and face were still pink while the rest of the animal was grey).

At 50 – 60 days, the puggle is left in a burrow with the mother returning every 5-6 days to feed it. At these feeds, the puggle ingests up to 40% of its body weight (the result looks perhaps like the picture below!).
When the puggle is seven months old and looks like a smaller version of the adult, the mother opens the burrow and feeds it. The mother then pushes it back into the burrow, leaving the entrance open this time and leaves – leaving the puggle to fend for itself.

If you see an echidna, take the time to watch this incredible creature, but please don't move it to another location. Moving a female echidna during the breeding season may mean a puggle will die. If you see an echidna crossing the road, stop and allow it to move across, if necessary you may assist it to cross, but always make sure it is moved in the direction it was going.

Brenda also sent this picture of a puggle that has just been fed. They must have very large stomachs at that age since they are fed only every 5-6 days by their roaming mothers.

If you would like information on echidnas or any other wildlife species, please call Brenda or Garry on 03 54612970. And as always...If you find sick, injured or orphaned wildlife, then please call Wildlife Rescue and Information Network (WRIN) on 0419 356433.
New members of WRIN are always needed.....

From the Mailbag
Author: Elaine Mathison

Each month the club receives a number of newsletters and magazines: some by subscription and some in exchange for Whirrakee. These are available from the club library.

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PARKWATCH(VNPA)
September 2007

"Project Hindmarsh": a progress report after ten years. Planting began as a means of linking the Big and Little Deserts and has now extended to restoration of native habitat on private land.

"Fire in the High Country: its ecological impact" reports on the opportunity presented by the 2003 fires. Data and sample collection had begun the previous year and has proved invaluable in studying the "before and after" situation.

"The state of our parks" reviews Parks Victoria's State of the Parks Report 2007. This covers the period 2002-2005.

"Hawkestowe Park, South Morang" describes the natural and man-made features of this park on the Plenty River to the north of Melbourne. The Le Page homestead in the park dates from the 1850s.

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LANDCARE (DSE)
Winter 2007

- The View from the Mountain: how members of the Mount Toolebewong Group in Healesville broadened the focus from their mountain area to the whole community.

- How City Joe became Landcare Joe: a former city resident becomes an enthusiastic member of the Upper Spring Creek Landcare Group near Bendigo.

- A Landcare Park for Swan Hill: the Mid - Murray Landcare Network establishes an urban bushland reserve.

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THE BIRD OBSERVER(BOCA)
August 2007

"Flight Path to Peril": an Israeli ornithologist struggles to keep intact a vital stopover on one of the great migratory routes from Africa to Europe.

"Master of Concealment, the Large-Tailed Nightjar" reports on a visit to a waterbird sanctuary in India.

"On the Water's Edge" features some very fine photography by John Stirling.

"A Birdsville Odyssey" describes the varied scenery and birds seen on the way to this remote town - and some challenging weather conditions!

* * * * * * *

Also received recently:

*Geelong Naturalist (Geelong FNC)

*The Ballarat Naturalist (Ballarat FNC)

*Castlemaine Naturalist (C'Maine FNC)

*Sun-Nat (Sunraysia FNC)

*Field Nats News (FNCV)

*Plains Wanderer (Mid-Murray FNC)

*There are also a number of draft reports on various conservation related topics.

* * * * * * *

A letter to Ken King

Clive Fisher, an avid letter writer, has submitted this letter to be published in the Whirrakee. He has not had a reply yet.

Mr Ken King
Executive Director
Land and Fire Management,
Department of Sustainability and Environment
P.O. Box 500
East Melbourne Vic 8002

25-05-07

Dear Mr King,

Thank you for your undated letter, Your Ref DSE037252, which I received on 14-05-07.

I wonder if Mr Thwaites ever reads my letters to him himself. In past years, The Minister for Environment used to personally answer letters, proof of which is in one of my letters to him, and which your department should have. This does not seem to be the case in this day and age.

I am well aware that your department disagrees with my and other field naturalists' experience that the box-ironbark is fire retardant, but I wish your department would look at this view with an open mind, which is not happening at this time.

Your second paragraph refers to several wildfires that have occurred in the box-ironbark region of Victoria in recent years. One in particular, the 1987 Heathcote fire started near Lake Eppalock in dry European grass in a thwaite that stretches from the lake right to the Northern Highway. A thwaite, as you may know, according to the Australian Oxford Dictionary (1999) is 'a piece of wild land made arable'; or, as Peter Upsall's and Elsie Johnson's Word Finder explains it: is 'Forest land cleared for use as a pasture.' The fire would not have travelled so fast and so fiercely if the slow-burning box-ironbark forest had not been cleared and replaced by the flammable European grass. This fire raced with a westerly wind behind it to the Northern Highway north of Heathcote, jumping across to the box-ironbark forest, right where the ground rises very steeply to the summit of Mt Ida. It is well known that fire burns fast up a steep hill. When the fire reached the summit and started to burn slowly downhill, it was extinguished very easily by fire-fighters. A track had been bulldozed or scraped and the fire burned no further.

At the limit of the fire, there was a group of fifty-four grasstrees (*Xanthorrhoea glauca* or *X. australis*) with unburnt skirts right down to ground level, proving that they had not been burned since the 1834 fire, and all but two had their skirts burnt off by this 1987 fire.

In my first letter to Mr Thwaites, I enclosed a photograph of another, larger group of grasstrees, not far from the Mt Ida group which have remained unburnt since the deliberately-lit, documented fire of 1843.

My point is that the 1987 Heathcote fire began in grassland, and only burnt so much box-ironbark because of the steep terrain.

I mentioned in my March 27 letter that Dr Bill Holsworth told Mr Chris Halpin, in our meeting with him, that your box-ironbark fire histories are from your deliberate burns that have got out of your control. I suspect that one or both of the other fires you mentioned are in this category.

If I wrongly stated the DSE's role in the proposed burn at La Trobe University, then I apologise; however, the fact remains that no fire has occurred there for at least eighteen years, and probably much longer.

We field naturalists are well aware that the DSE responds to a number of unplanned fires in the Bendigo box-ironbark region each fire season, but you agree in your letter that 'the majority of these fires are extinguished before developing to any size.' This, of course, is because of the fire-retardant nature of the box-ironbark forest, unlike the steep terrain and flammable forest in the Victorian Alps, where fires have swept through huge areas twice in recent years.

I again call on you and the Minister to approach this concept with an open mind. We are never too old to learn.

Yours sincerely

Clive Fisher.

Diary

The General, Bird Observers Group and Fauna Study Group meetings are held at the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, Old High Street, Golden Square, unless otherwise indicated.

General Meetings

Wednesday November 14 **7.30pm**
We have had a change of speaker (but the same topic) for this month. Chris McGrath will talk about the weed spotter program. Chris is the Weed Officer at the Department of Primary Industry (DPI) at Kerang.

Wednesday December 12 **6.30pm**
Please note the earlier starting time to allow for the annual Christmas dinner. Bring a plate of sweets or savouries as well as your own drinks, cutlery etc.
With all of that festive cheer, Rob Watkins will give us an audio-visual presentation about the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club's history.

Excursions

The next club excursion is on **November 17.** Please see page 3 for the latest update.
Contact Richard Goonan if you plan to attend or have any questions (ph 0423418815).

Fauna Group

This group meets (in the clubrooms) on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 7.30pm.

Wednesday, November 28 **7.30pm**
Topic of the night to be advised.

Fauna Excursions

Every Friday morning starting at around 9 to 9:30, the Fauna Group inspects nest boxes in the Spring Gully area. The excursions are led by Maurie Lewis, 16 Vains St. Golden Square. Phone 0407 427 179 or 5442 1813. Phone Maurie to confirm exact departure times and location. If you don't phone but go directly to Maurie's house and find nobody at the house between 9 and 9:30 then the excursion is not on.

Wildlife Rescue & Information Network Inc.

W.R.I.N. is an organisation dedicated to the care of orphaned, sick or injured native animals. It is fully endorsed by the Dept of Sustainability and Environment.
Please call our Emergency Number for Help for Fauna in Need. Phone: 0419 356433.

SEANA Autumn campout 7 - 10 Mar 2008 Naracoorte Caves NP – 1st Notice

Attractions include Caves, rare fossils, viewing southern bent-winged bat wintering colony plus botany, bird and geology tours.
Registration and deposit of $30 to be paid by 20 September.
Total cost probably under $125 includes 3 catered dinners & caves guides.

Australian Naturalists Network (ANN) Get-together 10-18 May 2008

Mary River Park, Northern Territory.
Expression of interest & deposit of $200 was due to NTFNC by 1/10/07.
Accommodation at Mary River Park was to be booked directly by end of October 07.
The **second notice** has been received. This includes an update on accommodation availability at Mary River Park (cabins are essentially full) plus lists of tour operators and natural history references.

Anne Bridley (54493479) has further details

White Hills Botanic Gardens 150th Anniversary Celebrations

The City of Greater Bendigo together with the Friends of Bendigo Botanic gardens have planned a week of activities in November to celebrate this important anniversary. They go from Saturday 10th November through to Sunday 18th November. See contact numbers on page 3 of this *Whirrakee*.

Garden Working Bee

The next morning of (pleasant) work will be on Saturday 3rd November at 9am. All welcome